

City of
Bellevue



Transportation Commission Study Session

DATE: January 4, 2017

TO: Chair Zahn and Members of the Transportation Commission

FROM: Kevin McDonald, Senior Transportation Planner, 425-452-4558
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SUBJECT: Complete Streets Transportation Element Policy

DIRECTION REQUESTED

Action

☒ Discussion and direction

☐ Information

On September 16, 2016, the City Council passed Ordinance No. 6308 (**Attachment A**) adopting a Complete Streets policy framework – recommended by the Transportation Commission - to support the scoping, planning, designing, implementing, operating and maintaining roadway corridors and networks in Bellevue. Embedded in the ordinance is direction to the Transportation Commission to recommend updates or additional Complete Streets policies to be included as amendments to the Comprehensive Plan in 2017.

At the January 12, 2017 study session, staff requests the Transportation Commission review the staff recommendation (**Attachment C**) and provide direction if needed to revise policies. A final recommendation from the Transportation Commission is due to the Council in February or March, 2017.

Adoption of the Complete Streets Ordinance created eligibility for Bellevue for a Complete Streets Award through the Transportation Improvement Board. The pedestrian advocacy

organization, Feet First, nominated Bellevue for an award. Bellevue has been notified that it will receive a \$500,000 award from the Transportation Improvement Board in January 2017! Funds will be used to construct a raised intersection on 106th Avenue NE at the NE 6th Street Pedestrian Corridor. This is a project first identified in the Downtown Transportation Plan and recently included as a component of the Grand Connection. Both programs will contribute additional funding as needed to construct this project.

BACKGROUND

Please see **Attachment B** or view the hyperlink for the [September 8 Complete Streets staff memo](#). Listed in this memo are the 31 existing policies in the Comprehensive Plan that relate in some way to the Complete Streets “ethic” in Bellevue. In a Complete Streets environment, a community considers the mobility needs for all modes in the scoping, planning, designing, implementing, operating and maintaining roadway corridors and networks. As evidenced by the existing policies, Bellevue has demonstrated a Complete Streets ethic, yet staff recommends several policy amendments to more fully integrate Complete Streets in the Comprehensive Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommendation includes text amendments to 7 existing policies in the Transportation Element. Narrative language and a new call-out box will provide context and intent. Please refer to **Attachment C**.

Staff prepared this recommendation after reviewing existing policy language, especially the 31 policies that support the concept and ethic of Complete Streets, and identifying gaps that a few carefully chosen words could fill that express Bellevue’s Complete Streets ethic. Policy recommendations originated largely in the direction from the City Council in the language of the Complete Streets Ordinance, and in the best practices and policies from other jurisdictions that have embraced Complete Streets.

Staff proposes to weave policy recommendations into several sections of the Transportation Element to emphasize the Complete Streets ethic in Bellevue. This method of integrating policies throughout the Transportation Element as opposed to creating a new Complete Streets chapter, is similar to the approach the Commission recommended with the recently (December 12, 2016) adopted Vision Zero policies.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will return to the Transportation Commission on February 9, with any revised policy language to incorporate the Commission direction from January 12. If the Commission approves a final recommendation on February 9, then staff will work with the City Clerk to set a date for transmittal to the Council. Council may then initiate a Comprehensive Plan amendment for consideration and recommendation by the Planning Commission in 2017.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Complete Streets Ordinance – Adopted September 16, 2016
- B. September 8, 2016 Complete Streets Transportation Commission Agenda Memo
- C. Staff Recommendation for Complete Streets Policy

ATTACHMENT A

COMPLETE STREETS ORDINANCE – ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 16, 2016

1542-ORD
9/16/2016

ORIGINAL

CITY OF BELLEVUE, WASHINGTON

ORDINANCE NO. 6308

AN ORDINANCE adopting a Complete Streets policy framework for the City of Bellevue to scope, plan, design, implement, operate, and maintain street corridors and networks in Bellevue that provide safe mobility options and access for everyone; adding a new section 14.60.191 to the Bellevue City Code; and directing the Transportation Commission to review the Comprehensive Plan to determine if any updates or additional policies are warranted in consideration of this Complete Streets policy framework.

WHEREAS, the Washington state legislature has passed the Complete Streets Act (RCW 47.04.320-330), which established a grant program to encourage local governments to adopt ordinances “designed to provide safe access to all” using “context sensitive design and engineering principles [that] allow for flexible solutions depending on a community’s needs”; and

WHEREAS, communities neighboring Bellevue, including Redmond, Issaquah, Renton, and Seattle, as well as many other cities in Washington state and across the county, have adopted Complete Streets policies; and

WHEREAS, a Complete Streets policy framework is intended to guide the scoping, planning, design, implementation, operation, and maintenance of a connected network of transportation facilities to comprehensively consider, balance, and incorporate the mobility and access needs of people of all ages and abilities who are walking, bicycling, riding transit, driving, and transporting goods consistent with the need and character of the surrounding community; and

WHEREAS, the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2015, and established the goal to maintain and enhance a comprehensive multimodal transportation system to serve all members of the community with safe and reliable mobility options, including walking, biking, riding transit, and driving; and

WHEREAS, the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan includes 31 policies that express a Complete Streets ethic and support a multimodal approach to the scoping, planning, design, implementation, operation, and maintenance of a transportation system that is accessible to everyone; and

WHEREAS, the Bellevue Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan and the Bellevue Transit Master Plan guide the development and implementation of pedestrian, bicycle, and transit projects and support advocacy for funding and collaboration; and

14.60.191 Complete Streets

A. The City of Bellevue will, to the maximum extent practical, implement Complete Streets. For purposes of this section, Complete Streets means streets that provide appropriate facilities to meet the mobility needs of people of all ages and abilities who are walking, bicycling, riding transit, driving, and transporting goods.

B. Complete Streets will be implemented through the scoping, planning, designing, building, operating, and maintaining an integrated and connected transportation system. In cases where accommodations for a particular mode with a documented need cannot be incorporated along a particular street, accommodation of this mode may be provided along a convenient alternate route.

C. Facilities to accommodate a particular travel mode are not required to be provided, subject to the determination of the Transportation Director, when one or more of the following is present:

1. There is a known absence of current demand and an absence of probable future demand for a particular mode;
2. Modal plans (Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan, Transit Master Plan) and the Comprehensive Plan do not recommend facilities to support a particular mode;
3. Motorized or non-motorized users are prohibited by law from using the right-of-way;
4. Environmental constraints significantly and adversely affect the feasibility to provide facilities for a particular mode;
5. The cost of facilities for a particular mode would be disproportionate to the current demand and probable future demand;
6. Routine maintenance of the transportation system is performed that does not change the roadway geometry or operations, such as mowing, sweeping, spot repair, pothole repair, and joint or crack sealing;
7. A documented exception is granted by the Transportation Director.

D. The Transportation Director will continue to maintain and update a Transportation Design Manual that incorporates best practices to implement this Complete Streets policy framework, using design resources that include but are not limited to the latest editions of American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO), Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), and National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO).

Section 3. The City Council directs the Transportation Commission to review the Comprehensive Plan to determine if any updates or additional policies are warranted to incorporate a Complete Streets policy framework. The Transportation Commission will report its findings and recommendations to the City Council for its consideration in determining whether to initiate any Complete Streets policy amendments for the 2017 Comprehensive Plan Amendment package.

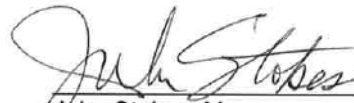
ORIGINAL

Section 4. Severability. If any provision of this Ordinance or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of this Ordinance, or its application to other persons or circumstances is not affected.

Section 5. This Ordinance shall take effect and be in force five (5) days after its passage and legal publication.

Passed by the City Council this 19th day of September, 2016,
and signed in authentication of its passage this 20th day of September,
2016.

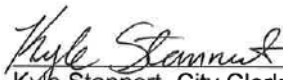
(SEAL)


John Stokes, Mayor

Approved as to form:


Robert A. Hyde, Deputy City Attorney

Attest:


Kyle Stannert, City Clerk

Published: September 22, 2016,

ATTACHMENT B

TRANSPORTATION COMMISISON AGENDA MEMO FOR SEPTEMBER 8, 2016

DATE: September 1, 2016

TO: Chair Zahn and Members of the Transportation Commission

FROM: Kevin McDonald, Senior Transportation Planner, 425-452-4558
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Andreas Piller, Assistant Planner, 425-452-6967, apiller@bellevuewa.gov

SUBJECT: Complete Streets Ordinance

DIRECTION REQUESTED

☒ **Action (Recommend Council adopt a Complete Streets Ordinance)**

☒ Discussion and direction

☐ Information

On July 14, 2016, Kevin McDonald informed the Transportation Commission about the Complete Streets Award Program from the Washington State Transportation Improvement Board. The program is intended to encourage local jurisdictions to “plan, design, operate and maintain...streets while considering all transportation users and modes”. To be eligible for this award, a jurisdiction must have an adopted “complete streets policy”. Bellevue has no such formal policy, yet policies with similar intent are deeply embedded in the Comprehensive Plan. In addition, Bellevue has modal plans – Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan, Transit Master Plan – that address multimodal mobility. The request from the Transportation Director, Dave Berg, is for Bellevue to become eligible for the Complete Streets Award Program. A special committee of the Transportation Commission (Cliff Chirls, Scott Lampe, and Janice Zahn) has drafted an ordinance for Commission consideration and transmittal to the City Council. To be eligible for the award the ordinance must be adopted by Council before October 1, 2016.

BACKGROUND

Complete Streets is a national movement intended to inspire communities to consider all modes of travel as they scope out project concepts, plan for alternative approaches, design the preferred approach, build the project, then maintain and operate the project as a component

of the entire transportation system. The Washington state legislature enacted complete streets legislation in 2011, with expressed intent as follows:

“Urban main streets should be designed to provide safe access to all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, motorists, and public transportation users. Context sensitive design and engineering principles allow for flexible solutions depending on a community’s needs, and result in many positive outcomes for cities and towns, including improving the health and safety of a community. It is the intent of the legislature to encourage street designs that safely meet the needs of all users and also protect and preserve a community’s environment and character.”

Going further, in 2015 the legislature directed the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) to create a “Complete Streets Grant Program” - RCW 47.04.320 - to encourage local governments to adopt urban arterial retrofit street ordinances designed to provide safe access to all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, motorists, and public transportation users, with the goals of:

- (a) Promoting healthy communities by encouraging walking, bicycling, and using public transportation;
- (b) Improving safety by designing major arterials to include features such as wider sidewalks, dedicated bicycle facilities, medians, and pedestrian streetscape features, including trees where appropriate;
- (c) Protecting the environment and reducing congestion by providing safe alternatives to single-occupancy driving; and
- (d) Preserving community character by involving local citizens and stakeholders to participate in planning and design decisions.

In May of 2016, the Washington State Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) introduced the [Complete Streets Award Program](#). To be eligible for a Complete Streets Award, a jurisdiction must have a system-wide complete streets policy. In Washington, 54 cities and one county currently meet this eligibility requirement (Bellevue is not one of the 54 cities). While Bellevue has policies, plans and projects that integrate a complete streets ethic (components of which are itemized in the box below), that is not enough to satisfy the eligibility requirement.

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|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comprehensive plan/complete streets integration• Strategic plan/complete streets integration• Specific modal plans for freight, bicycles and pedestrian• ADA transition plan adoption• Community engagement regarding design for all users• Performance data and statistics about users• Operational preparedness for all users and all modes<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Maintenance○ Sweeping○ Striping○ Landscape management | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff training in complete streets design• Standards that allow responsiveness to users• Budget prioritization of complete streets elements• Evidence of past implementation<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Clearly apparent integration of complete streets elements○ History of compliant projects○ Multimodal level of service standards○ History of actively implementing modal plans○ Presence of programs and enforcement of modal access○ Controlling traffic and speed○ Pedestrian scale lighting |
|---|--|

Request from Transportation Director

Transportation Director Dave Berg has requested that Bellevue attain eligibility for the Complete Streets Award Program at the earliest possible opportunity. According to the TIB staff, Bellevue must have a complete streets ordinance adopted prior to October 1, 2016 to be eligible for the current award cycle. Of course, substantial funding opportunities are to be gained, as is an overall policy framework for organizing the many complete streets–type policies that Bellevue has currently embedded in the Comprehensive Plan and the complete streets ethic that is documented in modal plans – Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan, Transit Master Plan.

Crafting a Complete Streets Ordinance

A special Transportation Commission committee on Complete Streets (Cliff Chirls, Scott Lampe, and Janice Zahn) together with staff, reviewed existing Bellevue policies and practices related to planning, design, implementing, maintaining and operating a transportation system for all modes and for all users. Bellevue has 31 adopted policies in the Comprehensive Plan related to one or more components of a complete streets transportation system. As noted below, there are policies related to a multimodal transportation system, pedestrians and bicyclists, transit riders, freight mobility, project design, and operating/maintaining the transportation system.

To the committee, the move to adopt a Complete Streets ordinance appeared to be a situation similar to that of the endorsement of Vision Zero, where the Transportation Commission found that a suite of adopted policy existed in Bellevue yet an overarching Vision Zero framework was lacking. Therefore, unlike the task before many jurisdictions that intend to embrace a complete streets ethic, Bellevue does not have to craft the fundamental policy support, simply the organizing principle of a complete streets policy framework.

The Complete Streets committee (with the review and concurrence of the City Attorney's Office) crafted a draft ordinance intended to: 1) establish the legislative intent, background and context through a series of "Whereas" statements; 2) amend the regulatory language of the Transportation Development Code, Chapter 14.60 to include the Complete Streets policy framework; and 3) direct the Transportation Commission to review the Comprehensive Plan to determine if additional policies or modified policies are needed to advance a complete streets ethic in Bellevue and to recommend any Comprehensive Plan amendments to the City Council for consideration in 2017.

INFORMATION

Bellevue Policy

The Comprehensive Plan includes 31 policies – largely in the Transportation Element - that support the concept and ethic of Complete Streets. Policies express a commitment in Bellevue to provide safe and reliable mobility options for people wherever they need to go throughout the city, whether they are walking, riding a bicycle, taking transit and/or driving a car.

As follows, the goal of the Transportation Element and its supporting policies articulate the completeness, connectedness and resiliency of the transportation system planning, design, implementation, operation and maintenance:

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT GOAL “To maintain and enhance a comprehensive multimodal transportation system to serve all members of the community.”

TR-4. Incorporate transit-supportive and pedestrian-oriented design features in new development through development review.

TR-20. Manage the multimodal transportation system in a corridor approach within and across Mobility Management Areas.

TR-21. Ensure that the transportation system infrastructure in Bellevue provides mobility options for all modes, and accommodates the mobility needs of everyone, including underserved populations.

TR-22. Implement and prioritize transportation system improvements to meet the level-of-service standards and other mobility targets for all transportation modes, recognizing the range of mobility needs of each corridor and Mobility Management Area.

TR-23. Coordinate improvements and operations among travel modes and provide connections between modes.

TR-24. Incorporate pedestrian and bicycle facility improvements into roadway projects in accordance with the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan.

TR-25. Incorporate transit/high-occupancy vehicle facility improvements in accordance with the Transit Master Plan and corridor studies.

TR-26. Increase system connectivity for all modes by providing for roadway, pedestrian, and bicycling connections in newly developing and redeveloping areas.

TR-27. Design, implement, and maintain transportation system improvements and deliver transportation services and programs in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

TR-30. Establish multimodal level-of-service and concurrency standards and other mobility measures and targets for transportation corridors and in each area of the city in consideration of planned development patterns and mobility options.

TR-32. Utilize level-of-service standards for transportation corridors that reflect the range of available and intended mobility options.

TR-33. Utilize concurrency standards that consider the available and intended mobility options for transportation corridors, Mobility Management Areas and implementation and management priorities.

TR-34. Monitor the level-of-service for all modes and adjust programs and resources as necessary to achieve mobility targets and objectives.

TR-48. Employ intelligent transportation system technology and infrastructure to support the efficient movement of people and vehicles throughout the city.

TR-51. Provide sufficient arterial rights-of-way to provide space for street trees and landscaping, and to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle facilities, while considering neighborhood character and context.

TR-52. Design arterials and streets to fit the intended character of the areas through which they pass.

TR-53. Maintain and enhance safety for all users of the roadway network.

TR-61. Allow for repurposing of travel lanes for other uses such as parking, transit or pedestrian and bicycle facilities where excess vehicular capacity exists and/or to optimize person throughput along a corridor.

TR-73. Implement infrastructure and technology to support reliable transit arrival time and travel time along the frequent transit network.

TR-78. Develop and implement, in conjunction with the transit providers, an integrated way-finding system to facilitate transit ridership that incorporates principles of universal design and uses multiple languages.

TR-103. Promote and facilitate walking and bicycling.

TR-104. Incorporate pedestrian and bicycle facilities along with other mobility options in planning, developing and maintaining the transportation system.

TR-111. Consider the personal health benefits and the community environmental benefits of walking, jogging, and bicycling in pedestrian and bicycle project design and funding.

TR-116. Improve the opportunities for pedestrians to safely cross streets at intersections and designated mid-block locations.

TR-126. Provide for the needs of freight movement in managing the existing transportation system and developing new facilities.

TR-139. Develop the transportation system in Bellevue to minimize environmental and neighborhood impacts, while addressing the city’s long-term transportation and land use objectives.

TR-146. Consider neighborhood traffic and livability conditions and address potential adverse impacts of public and private projects during the planning, designing, permitting, and construction phases.

TR-147. Evaluate neighborhood impacts as part of corridor and subarea transportation studies.

UD-63. Ensure continuous and safe sidewalks wide enough to serve current and planned uses along arterials that are integrated with abutting land uses.

UD-66. Ensure that sidewalks, walkways, and trails are furnished, where needed and appropriate, with lighting, seating, landscaping, street trees, planter strips, trash receptacles, public art, bike racks, railings, handicap access, newspaper boxes, etc. without interfering with pedestrian circulation.

UD-72. Work with the community to identify and develop a system of neighborhood greenways that offer safe alternative routes for pedestrians and bicyclists

Other Local Complete Streets Policies

Nearby cities have adopted some formal recognition of the concept and ethic of Complete Streets. This recognition has typically been adopted in the form of an ordinance that amended the municipal code. Several examples of local ordinances are listed and linked below.

- The city of [Kirkland](#) amended its municipal code in 2006 to include “bicycle and pedestrian ways along transportation facilities” in the planning, development and construction of transportation facilities. (Note: not on TIB award eligible list)
- The city of [Redmond](#) adopted an ordinance in 2007 that was an early eastside adoption of specific complete streets language that amended the Redmond City Code to create a new Complete Streets chapter 12.06.
- The city of [Seattle](#) adopted an ordinance in 2007 that directed SDOT to “plan, design and construct new city transportation improvement projects to provide appropriate

accommodation for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and persons of all abilities, while promoting safe operation for all users.”

- The city of [Issaquah](#) amended its municipal code in 2008 with a new chapter 12.10 to describe the purpose of complete streets and to provide for exemptions where construction is not practical, feasible, cost effective, unsafe or contrary to the comprehensive plan.
- The city of Tacoma adopted a resolution in 2009 to endorse the creation and development of Tacoma’s [Complete Streets Design Guidelines](#). The objective is to provide a framework and cost-effective tools to support street designs that safely, comfortably and appropriately accommodate all users and transportation modes; foster a sense of place in the public realm; and, reduce environmental impacts.
- A recent Complete Streets policy adopted in Washington state was in Battle Ground. That city’s [resolution](#) was recognized as a best practice in “The Best Complete Streets Policies of 2015” as determined by [National Complete Streets Coalition](#) and Smart Growth America.

RECOMMENDATION

The special Transportation Commission committee on Complete Streets recommends the full Commission approve a draft Complete Streets Ordinance (Attached) and to expeditiously transmit the recommendation to the City Council for consideration and adoption.

NEXT STEPS

If approved on September 8, the Transportation Commission will transmit a recommendation for a Complete Streets Ordinance to the Council for review during the September 12 Study Session. Council action is expected during the Regular Session on September 19, 2016.

ATTACHMENTS

Transportation Commission Recommendation for Complete Streets Ordinance

ATTACHMENT C

Bellevue Comprehensive Plan

Transportation Element Policy – Integrating a Complete Streets Ethic

Complete Streets Narrative

The transportation system in Bellevue provides safe and reliable mobility options for people to travel throughout the city. A Complete Streets network enables equitable access for all people and all travel modes. Each street in Bellevue is unique, and each street must serve a range of users with a design that is compatible with the context of the corridor and community. Complete Streets may also create great places that encourage people to gather in public spaces.

The Transportation Element supports a complete, connected, and resilient multimodal transportation system. City staff incorporate Complete Streets best practices and consider all roadway users and all modes of travel as they scope project concepts, plan for alternative approaches, design the preferred solution, build the project, then maintain and operate the project.

A Complete Streets network approach provides access for all modes along convenient alternate routes in situations where it is not possible, practical, or desirable to incorporate facilities for all modes on a particular street

The Transportation Director maintains and updates a Transportation Design Manual that incorporates best practices to implement a Complete Streets approach, using design guidance from professional organizations such as the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO), Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), and National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO).

COMPLETE STREETS BEST PRACTICES*

- **Roadway Users and Modes** – Complete Streets are for people of all ages and abilities walking, bicycling, and using public transit, and for those driving private automobiles, freight and delivery vehicles, and emergency vehicles.
- **Projects and Phases** – Complete Streets applies on the public rights-of-way and easements for all project phases including scoping, planning, designing, implementing, operating, and maintaining the transportation system.
- **Clear, Accountable Exceptions** – The conditions for granting exceptions are specific and require approval from the Transportation Director.
- **Network Connectivity** – Complete Streets promotes a comprehensive, integrated, connected network for all modes.
- **Design** – Complete Streets uses a best practices approach and practices balance and flexibility to accommodate the needs of all roadway users.
- **Community Context** – Complete Streets solutions complement the context of the corridor and surrounding community.
- **Performance Measures** – Complete streets performance is measured against adopted level-of-service standards and mode-specific plans.

**Adapted for Bellevue from the National Complete Streets Coalition*

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT GOAL “To scope, plan, design, implement, operate, maintain and enhance a comprehensive, multimodal transportation system to serve all members of the community.”

Mobility Management Section

TR-20. ~~Manage~~ Scope, plan, design, implement, operate, and maintain a complete and the multimodal transportation system in a corridor approach within and across Mobility Management Areas.

TR-22. Implement and prioritize transportation system improvements to meet the multimodal level-of-service standards, Complete Streets expectations, and other mobility targets for all transportation modes, recognizing the range of mobility needs of each corridor and Mobility Management Area.

TR-23. Coordinate improvements and operations among travel modes, along corridors and at intersections, and provide connections between modes.

TR-26. Increase system connectivity for all modes by providing for ~~roadway, vehicular, transit,~~ pedestrian, and bicycling connections to create a Complete Streets network throughout the city in newly developing and redeveloping areas.

TR-32. Utilize multimodal level-of-service standards for transportation corridors that reflect the range of available and intended mobility options.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Section

TR-104. Incorporate pedestrian and bicycle facilities along with other mobility options in scoping, planning, designing, implementing, operating developing and maintaining the transportation system.

Neighborhood Protection Section

TR-147. Evaluate neighborhood impacts and Complete Streets implementation opportunities as part of corridor and subarea transportation studies.